Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

An important pillar in becoming the "First Great City of the 21st Century" is the commitment to implement a continuous, systematic process for evaluating the quality and cost of services and products delivered by the City and comparing them with private and public industry leaders. This process is known as benchmarking and includes identifying and incorporating changes within the organization that will place the City among the industry leaders.

Often there are misconceptions regarding the benchmarking process, originally developed by Xerox Corporation. This section provides an overview of the comprehensive corporate-style benchmarking methodology used by the City.

What is Benchmarking?

Benchmarking is a continuous, systematic process used to evaluate the quality and cost of services and products delivered by the City and compare them with private and public industry leaders. Benchmarking is a time-consuming, labor-intensive process requiring discipline and commitment from the leadership of an organization in order to make the necessary changes to become an industry leader. By conducting benchmarking projects, the City strives to ensure the highest quality services are provided to the taxpayers at optimum costs.

One of the common misconceptions of benchmarking is that the entire process involves a onetime comparison of a few performance measures that typically result in an organization unilaterally changing procedures to improve performance. In reality, collecting comparison data is only a small piece of the benchmarking process. Benchmarking cannot be, by definition or practice, a quick and easy one-time event that provides simple answers to the City's complex operations.

San Diego's approach to benchmarking is similar to the process developed by Xerox and utilized by corporations across the country. The process involves making comparisons between the industry leaders, conducting a full analysis of the performance gap between the City and the best-in-class performers, identifying process differences, and adopting changes in procedures required to close the gap and make the City competitive. This process was not developed to occur on a onetime basis, but should be conducted continually in order to keep pace with changing industries and business practices. The following table and text outline the nine steps that comprise the continuous improvement effort of the benchmarking process.

Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

The Benchmarking Process

Step 1 - Identify Comparables
The first step in the benchmarking process is to identify what will be compared and to ensure that the organization is committed to providing adequate resources to conduct the benchmarking process. Some business units in the City begin the process by identifying simple comparisons between their operation and other select government agencies and privately operated organizations in a limited assessment of a broad range of functions. This is a less expensive means to identify gaps in performance and perhaps determine the focus of a more defined benchmarking project.

Step 2 - Collect Data
The second step in the benchmarking process involves collecting data from other organizations that can be compared against the City of San Diego. To be successful at this step, all business units in the City must establish performance measures that allow for comparison with other organizations. The development of a Performance Based Budget provides the foundation required to accomplish this step. The City contacts other municipalities and private industry leaders in order to make comparisons and identify industry benchmarks. This effort includes the collection of both quantitative and process data.

Step 3 - Determine Performance
Once data has been collected from private and municipal organizations, it is compared against the City's operations. These analyses allow the City to determine if there is a gap between the performance levels of the City and the best industry performers. In cases where the City is believed to be the industry benchmark, this process confirms perceptions through the use of quantitative data.

Step 4 – Communicate Findings
Communication is the key to process improvement. Although this is identified as a separate step, communication with employees is essential from inception of a benchmarking project. It is from this point forward that communication is critical to the success of the project. It is also helpful to inform employees of the steps involved in this process and critical to convey the changes that are occurring in the organization and impacting their work. Employees often have information necessary to successfully change baseline operations.

Step 5 - Establish Improvement
Once findings have been communicated to the employees, the organization begins to discuss and explore specific areas of improvement. The procedures and products of the industry benchmarks are analyzed for applicability to the organization. Cost benefit analyses are conducted to determine the most efficient and effective operations. Ideas are discussed with employees who are impacted in order to insure the feasibility of any changes and to generate additional ideas for improvement. This two-way communication typically allows employees to develop concepts into workable solutions and action plans.

Step 6 – Develop Action Plan

An action plan assists departments in developing an organized approach to implement change within their operation. An action plan usually describes what is going to be accomplished, how it will be accomplished and who is responsible for implementation.

Step 7 – Implementation Schedule

As with the action plan, an implementation schedule allows the organization to establish specific time lines and goals related to the action items. In addition, the relationships between action items are identified. The schedule should indicate if action items are implemented sequentially or simultaneously, thus providing early identification of coordination required among those involved in the effort.

Step 8 – Monitor Results

Determining the success of the benchmarking process is contingent on how well the organization monitors the results of the change efforts. Performance measures must be established and tracked from the inception of the project. The City has established several committees and procedures to assist in monitoring the benchmarking efforts. These committees consist of community members, business leaders and City staff from several departments, who review and advise departments throughout competitive benchmarking projects.

Step 9 – Recalibrate Findings

Benchmarking is a continuous optimization effort. Driven by technology, changing business practices and customer needs, the benchmarking process allows the organization to remain current with on-going changes in the industry, manage streams of information, tailor production, and evolve as industry leaders. City departments are using benchmarking as an important tool in their efforts to operate competitively and continuously improve the products and services they provide for the public.

In this section, departments have identified services they perform that can be compared to various other cities. The departments have collected data and the following graphs can be used to determine performance and communicate findings. If improvements can be made, the appropriate steps will be taken.

Comparison to Other Jurisdictions

The following graphs provide comparative information on other cities that provide services similar to the City of San Diego. In general, comparisons are made between San Diego and ten similarly-sized western cities: Austin, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Portland, San Antonio, San Jose, and Seattle. For some comparisons, other cities or jurisdictions were selected. Additional information about each city can be found at the end of the section.
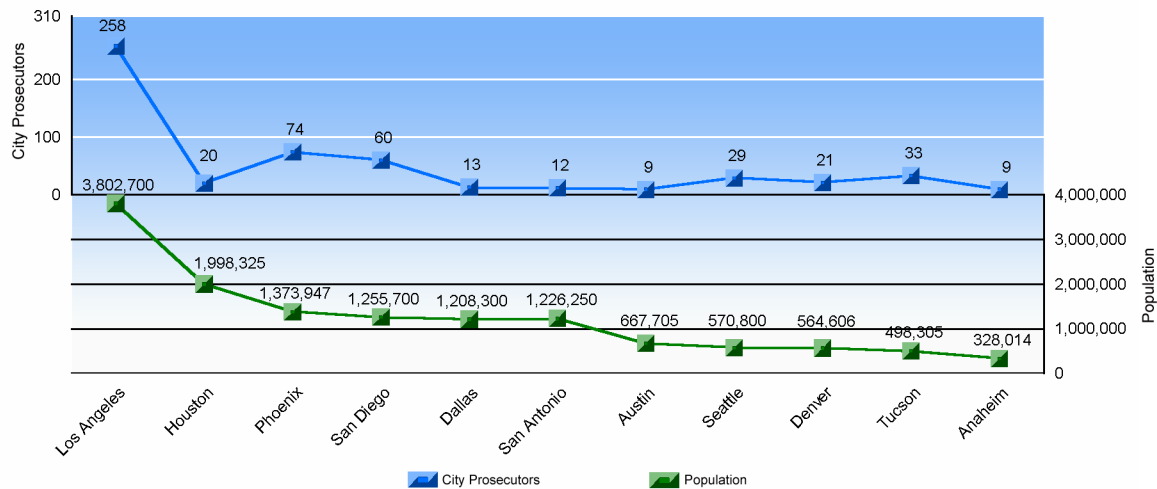
Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

City Attorney Benchmarks

While the cities surveyed ranged from 0.97 to 6.78 city prosecutors per 100,000 population, San Diego fell near the middle with 4.78 city prosecutors per 100,000 population.

CITY PROSECUTORS TO POPULATION

*Portland and San Jose City Attorneys do not handle criminal cases.

Environmental Services Benchmarks

The following charts compare San Diego's per household cost for refuse collection and recycling diversion rate with other large cities in the country.

San Diego's fees are the second lowest among the cities surveyed.

San Diego had the fourth highest recycling diversion rate in 2001.

REFUSE COLLECTION/DISPOSAL COST PER HOUSEHOLD PER MONTH

FISCAL YEAR 2002

RECYCLING DIVERSION RATE

CALENDAR YEAR 2001[1]
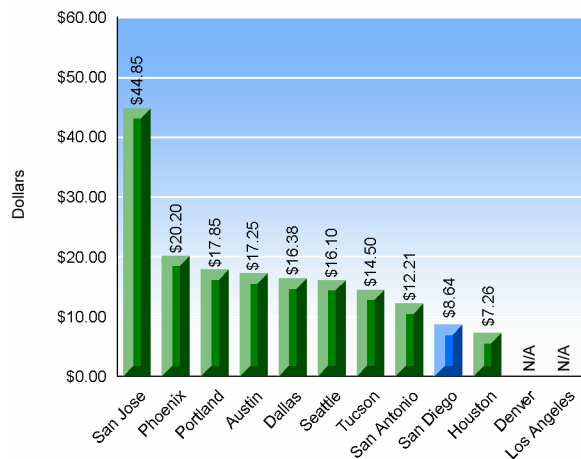
Information is not uniformly collected by the cities surveyed. Certain information has been adjusted to provide a consistent comparison. Total cost is considerably influenced by disposal fees, which vary significantly by jurisdiction.

In Tucson, San Diego, and Houston, services are provided from the City General Fund. In San Jose, Phoenix, Portland, Austin, Dallas, Seattle, and San Antonio, residents pay a monthly fee.

In San Jose, the monthly rate is for a 96-gallon container, which is comparable to San Diego. The fee includes unlimited recycling and yard waste collection.

In Phoenix, the monthly rate is for an individual 60/90/100-gallon container. There is an additional charge of $10.10 for additional containers.

In Portland and Seattle, the monthly rate is for a 32-gallon container. In Portland, the monthly fee includes weekly pickup of garbage and recycling, and biweekly pickup of yard debris.
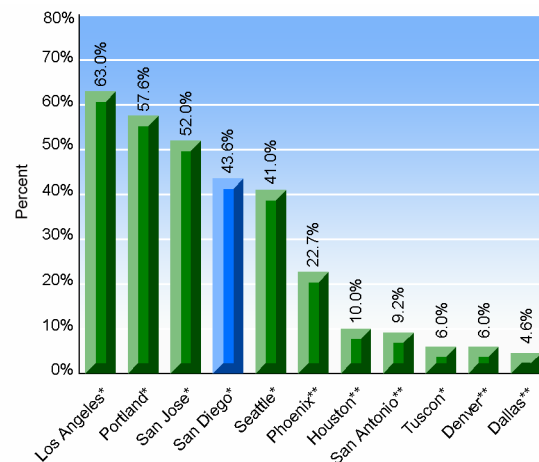
Austin uses a Pay-As-You-Throw system where customers who produce less garbage pay less. The monthly rate of $17.25 is for a 90-gallon container. There are additional fees for additional containers.

In Tucson, the monthly rate is for collection twice a week.

San Diego has no limit on the amount of residential waste that is collected weekly.

[1] Calendar Year 2002 figures not yet available. Data as reported by Calendar Year in the State of California's annual Source Reduction and Recycling Element Report.

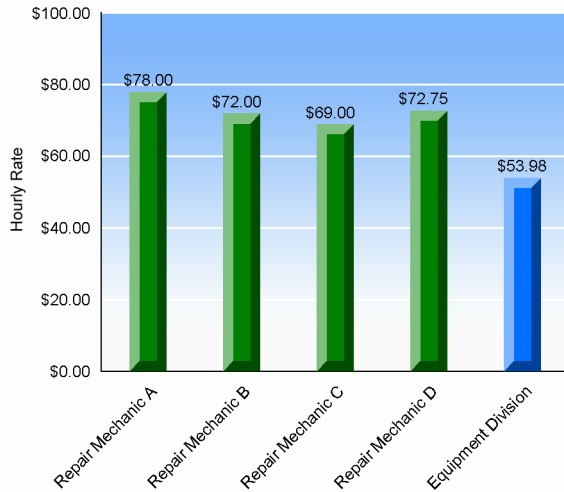 *Residential and commercial
**Residential only

Performance Management Program
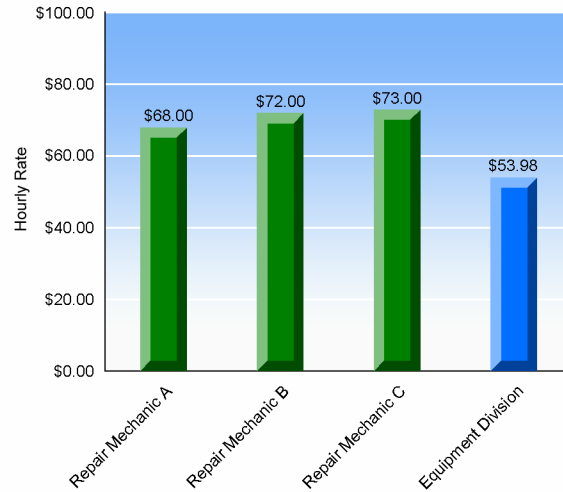## Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

General Services Benchmarks

Equipment Division's hourly shop rate is significantly less expensive than the other local repair shops surveyed.
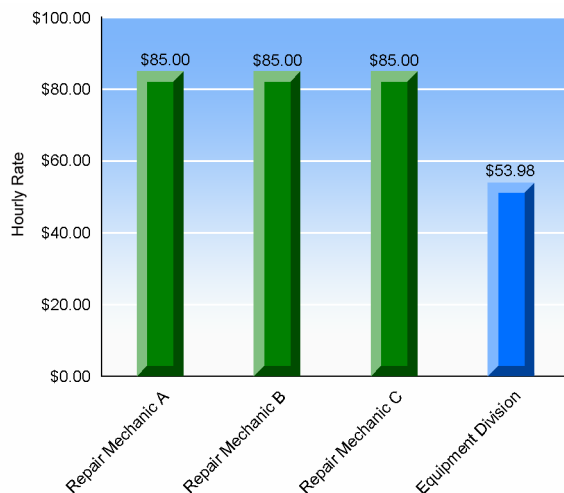
HOURLY SHOP RATE FOR REPAIR MECHANICS - LIGHT DUTY TRUCKS

HOURLY SHOP RATE FOR REPAIR MECHANICS - MEDIUM DUTY TRUCKS

HOURLY SHOP RATE FOR REPAIR MECHANICS - HEAVY DUTY TRUCKS

Note: Repair Mechanics A, B, C and D are privately owned shops in San Diego that perform work similar to General Services Equipment Division. Names were withheld for privacy.
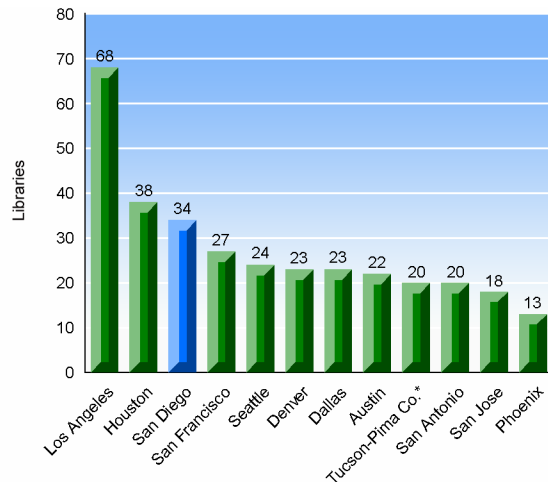
Library Benchmarks

San Diego ranks third in number of library facilities. Although Los Angeles and Houston operate more branches, their populations are substantially greater.

San Diego ranks second in annual attendance among libraries that track attendance. Although Los Angeles has 86 percent greater attendance than San Diego, its population is three times greater.

LIBRARIES PER CITY
FY 2002

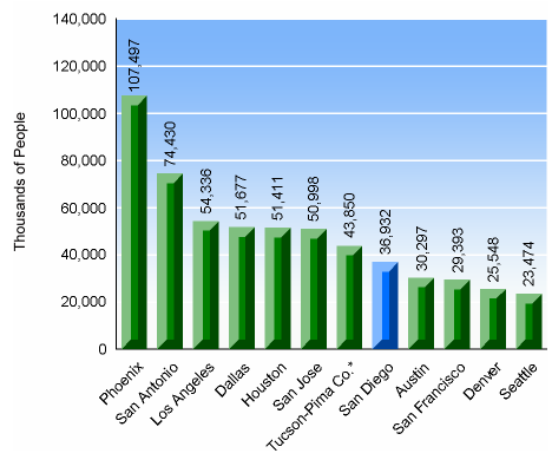
TOTAL ATTENDANCE IN LIBRARIES
FY 2002

San Diego has the fifth smallest average library service area population. Economies of scale can be achieved by operating fewer larger facilities.
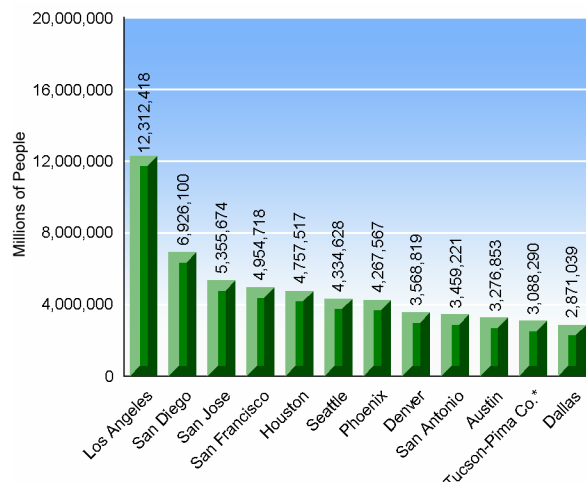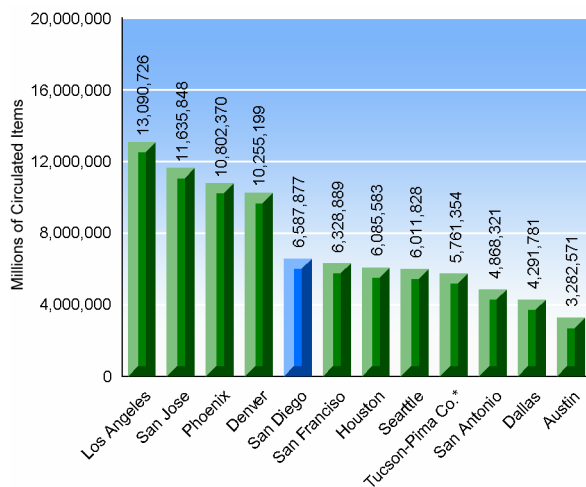
San Diego has the fifth highest annual circulation at 6,587,877. The four systems with higher circulation have recently opened new or expanded main libraries.

AVERAGE POPULATION/BRANCH
FY 2002

TOTAL CIRCULATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS
FY 2002

* The City of Tucson provides library service to all of Pima County and receives funding from the County.
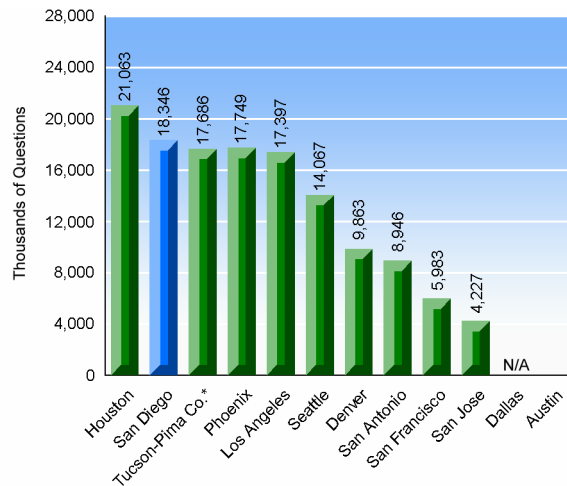
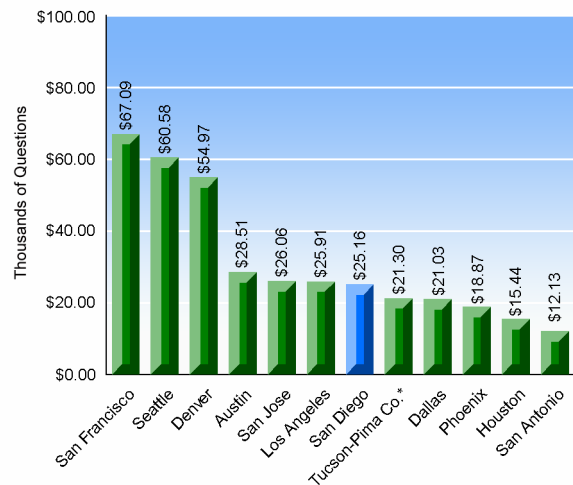# Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

San Diego ranks second in number of reference questions answered per Librarian in Fiscal Year 2002.
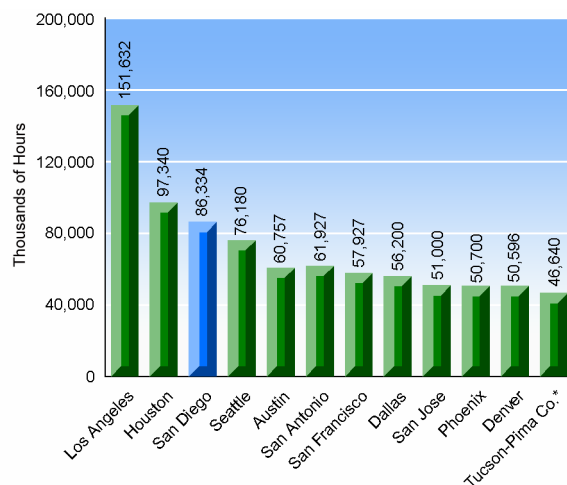
REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED PER LIBRARIAN
FY 2002

San Diego ranks seventh in per capita expenditures, with only one-third the spending level of Seattle.

EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA
FY 2002

San Diego ranked third in annual operating hours with only Los Angeles and Houston with more facilities thus having higher operating hours.

ANNUAL TOTAL OPERATING HOURS
FY 2002

* The City of Tucson provides library service to all of Pima County and receives funding from the County.

Metropolitan Wastewater Benchmarks
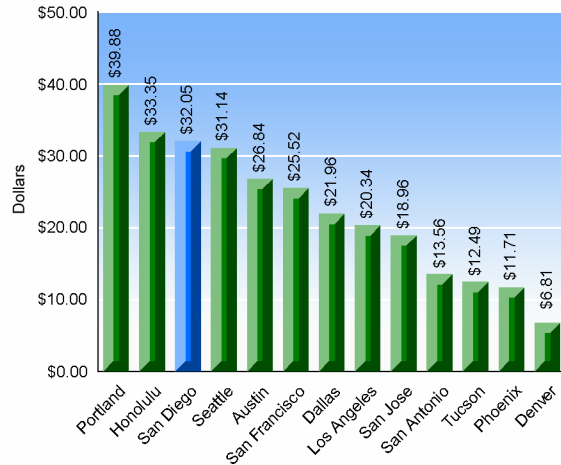
San Diego residents pay an average of $32.05 monthly for sewer services.

AVERAGE MONTHLY RESIDENTIAL SEWER BILL
FY 2002

NOTE: Certain jurisdictions charge part of the fee for sewerage service on property tax bills or regional agency bills.

MWWD treats 180 million gallons of sewage daily.

MILLIONS OF GALLONS OF SEWAGE TREATED PER DAY
FY 2002

MWWD serves 2.1 million San Diegans.

POPULATIONS SERVED
FY 2002
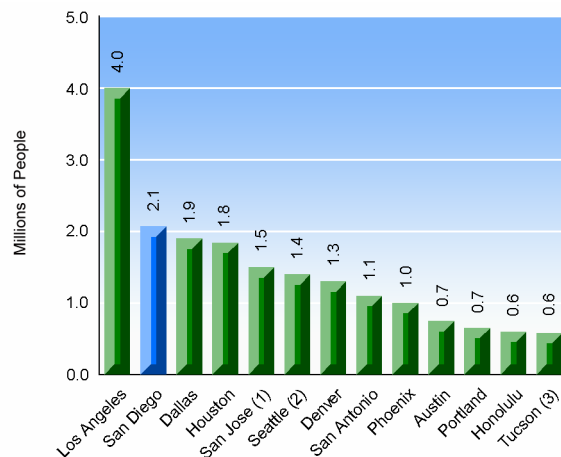
(1) City of San Jose/Santa Clara Water Control Plant provides wastewater treatment.
(2) City of Seattle: King County provides wastewater treatment.
(3) City of Tucson: Pima County provides wastewater treatment. Outlying areas are included in average sewage treated per day.

Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego
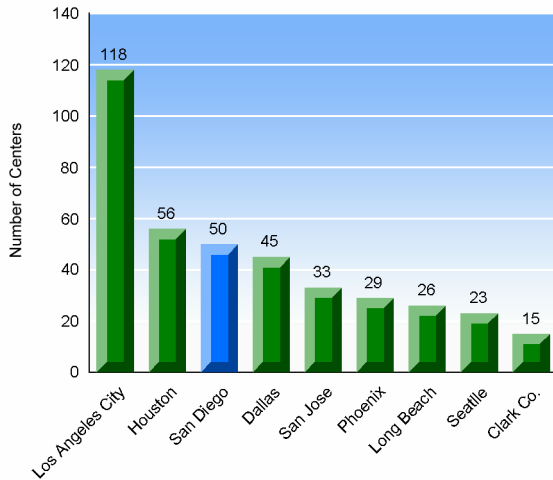
Park and Recreation Benchmarks

San Diego was among the top four cities for the number of recreation centers operated.

San Diego manages the most acreage of the cities surveyed.

NUMBER OF RECREATION CENTERS
FY 2002

PARK ACREAGE COMPARISON
FY 2002
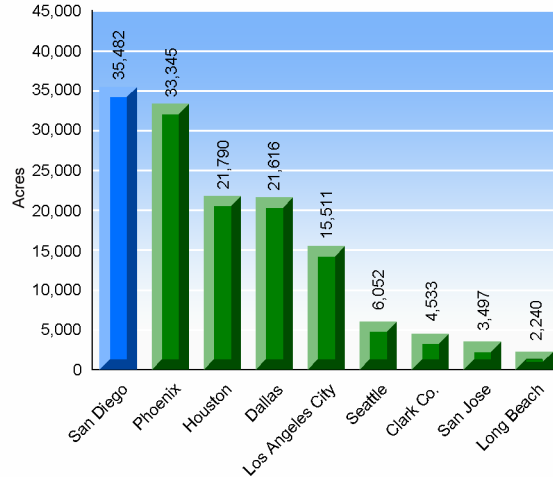
The average number of residents served per one Park and Recreation Department employee was 1,183. One San Diego employee serves an average of 1,493 residents.

San Diego opens its recreation centers an average of 61.7 hours per week. The average of all cities surveyed was 62.3.

NUMBER OF CITIZENS SERVED PER FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT GENERAL FUND EMPLOYEE
FY 2002
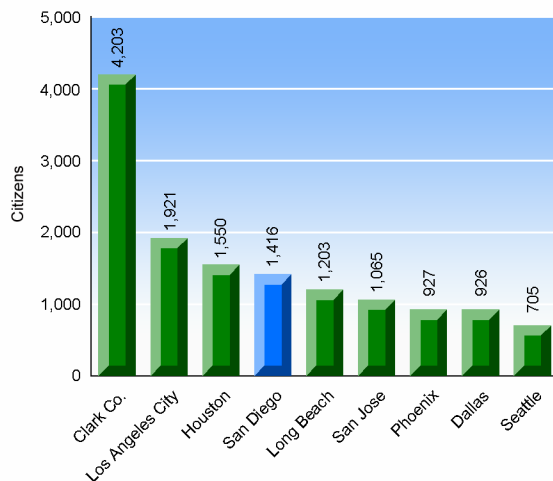
COMPARISON OF RECREATION CENTER OPERATION HOURS
FY 2002
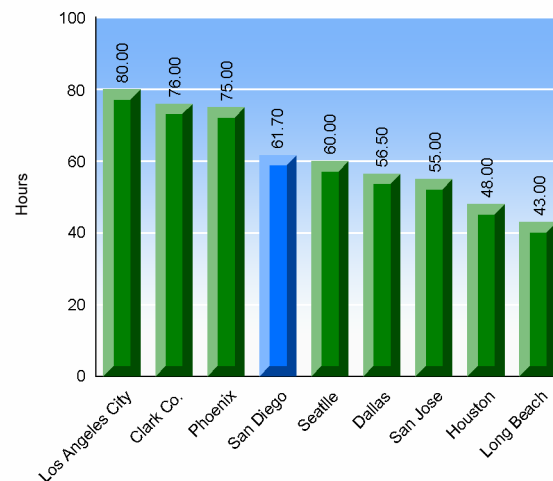
San Diego budgets over $50 General Fund dollars per person on Parks and Recreation.

GENERAL FUND PARK AND RECREATION BUDGET PER CAPITA
FY 2002

Bar chart of Dollars per capita:
- Seattle: $65.21
- Phoenix: $60.90
- Long Beach: $57.62
- Dallas: $56.71
- San Diego: $51.75
- Houston: $29.04
- Los Angeles: $26.62
- Clark Co.: $14.65
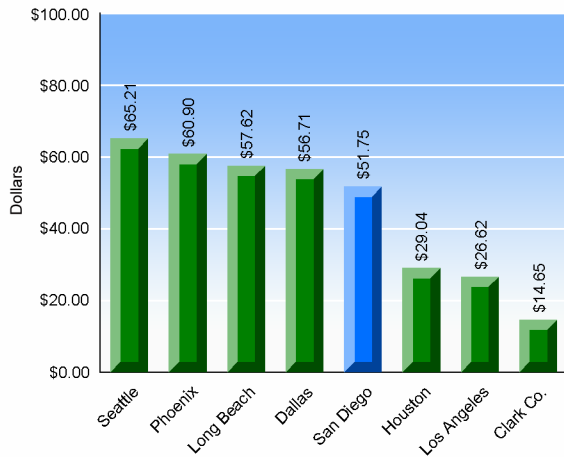
Performance Management Program

Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

Police Benchmarks

Police Officers per 1,000 population is the number of sworn police officers per 1,000 citizens.

The Crime Index Rate is the total number of reported index crimes (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and vehicle theft) per 1,000 population. San Diego's crime rate is compared to that of ten other large western United States cities.

POLICE OFFICERS PER 1,000 POPULATION

City	Police Officers
San Francisco	2.94
Houston	2.70
Denver	2.66
Dallas	2.38
Los Angeles	2.38
Phoenix	1.96
Austin	1.80
San Diego	1.73
San Antonio	1.69
San Jose	1.52

Note: The information in the graphs above represent Calendar Year 2000.
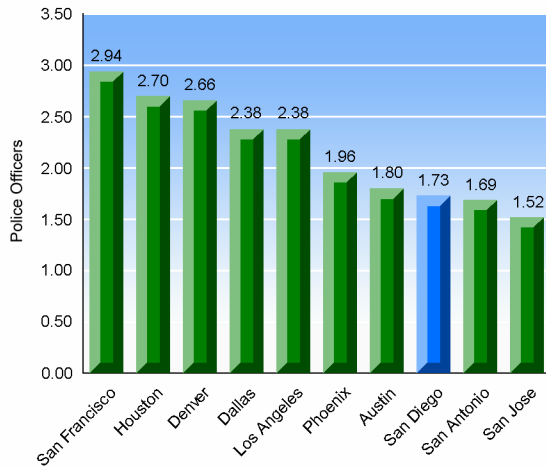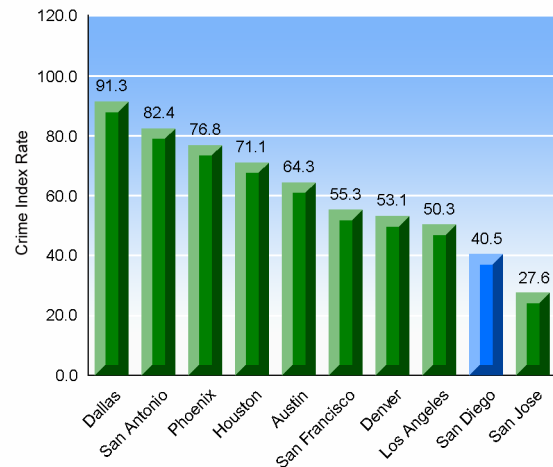**Source:** Other city data from Crime in the United States, 2000; San Diego data from City of San Diego Police Department.

CRIME INDEX RATE

City	Crime Index Rate
Dallas	91.3
San Antonio	82.4
Phoenix	76.8
Houston	71.1
Austin	64.3
San Francisco	55.3
Denver	53.1
Los Angeles	50.3
San Diego	40.5
San Jose	27.6

Crime Index Actuals is the total number of index crimes reported to the Police during the year.

CRIME INDEX ACTUALS

City	Crime Index Actuals
Los Angeles	189,278
Houston	141,987
Dallas	111,006
Phoenix	104,975
San Antonio	96,498
San Diego	50,444
San Francisco	42,174
Austin	43,210
Denver	30,727
San Jose	25,163
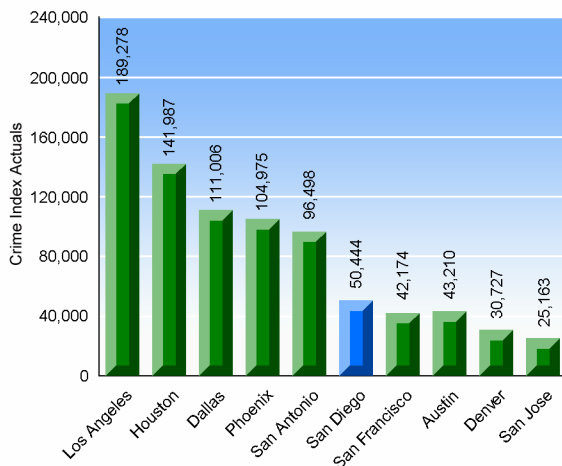
San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Benchmarks

Of those cities surveyed, San Diego ranks eighth in the number of sworn fire fighter personnel.
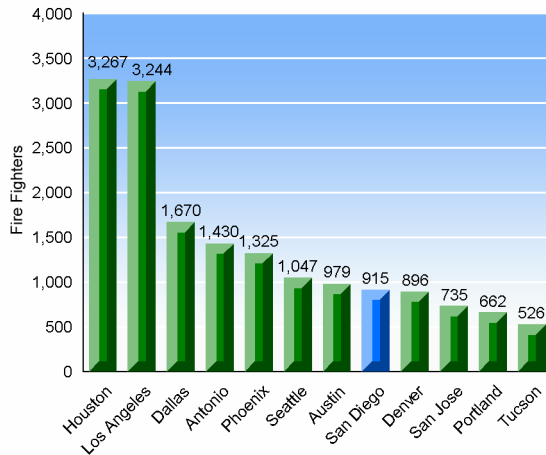
Of those cities surveyed, San Diego ranks sixth in the number of fire stations with a total of 43.

NUMBER OF SWORN FIREFIGHTERS
FY 2002

NUMBER OF FIRE STATIONS
FY 2002
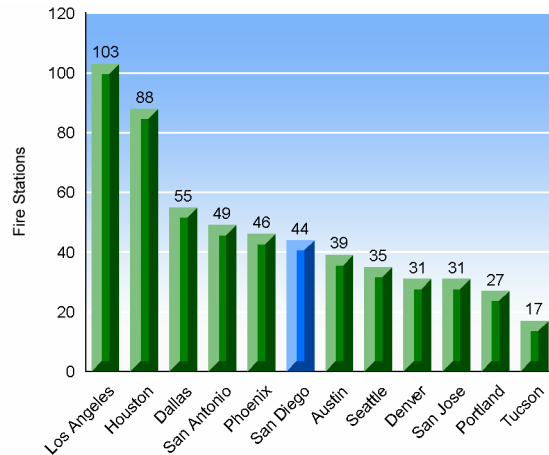
Of those cities surveyed, San Diego, along with four other cities, ranks ninth in terms of the number of sworn fire fighters per capita, with 1.8 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

San Diego ranks third among the cities surveyed in terms of the number of residents served per fire station, with an average of 30,307 residents served per fire station.

NUMBER OF SWORN FIREFIGHTERS PER 1,000 POPULATION
FY 2002
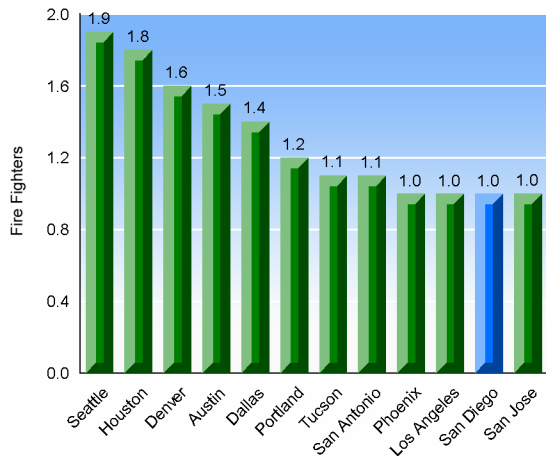
RESIDENTS SERVED PER FIRE STATION
FY 2002
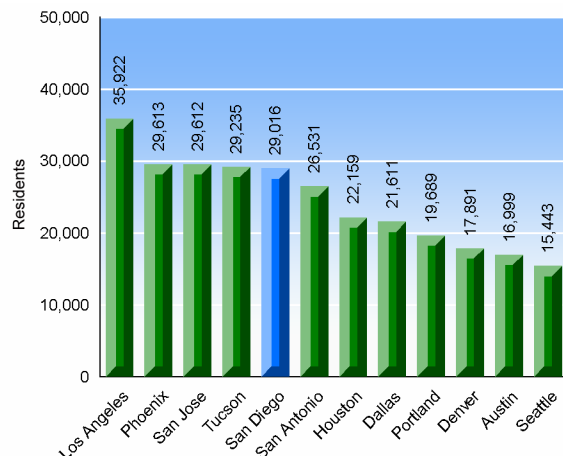
Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

Of those cities surveyed, San Diego has the second lowest Cost Loss Index.

COST LOSS INDEX
FY 2001
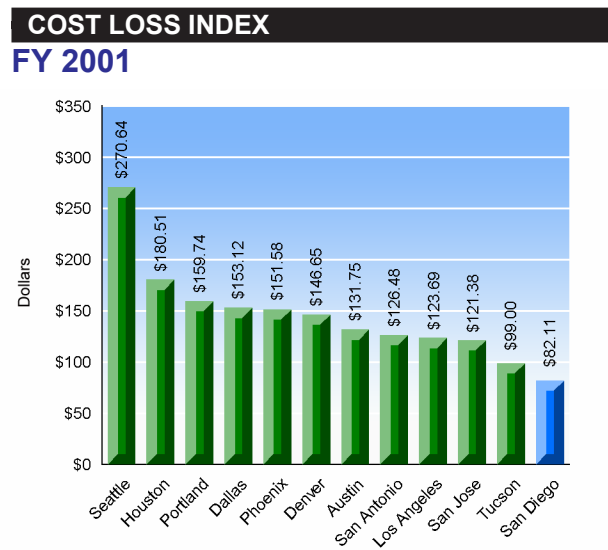
Transportation Benchmarks

San Diego had the fourth lowest traffic fatality rate among cities surveyed.

TRAFFIC FATALITY COMPARISONS
FY 2001
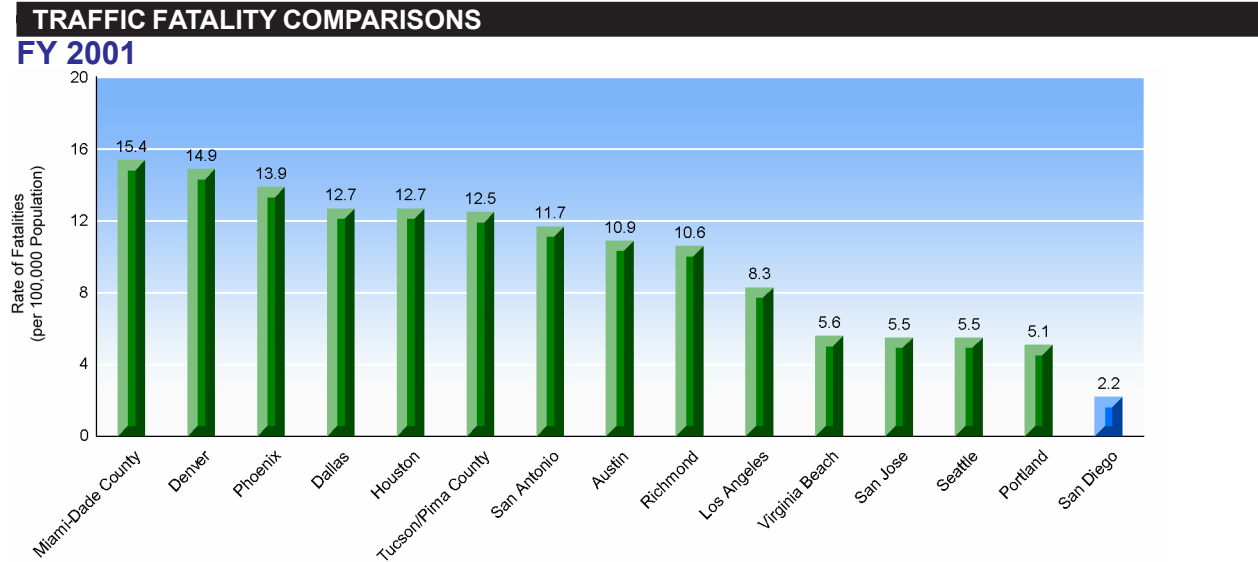
Note: Information provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Admnistration, U.S. Department of Transportation.
Due to the delay in cities reporting to the federal government, Fiscal Year 2002 data will not be available until December 2003.

Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

Water Benchmarks

This graph compares each water agency's total miles of water mains that deliver potable water to all customers. For example, San Diego's water mains range from the 72-inch Shepherd Canyon Pipeline, to six-inch residential distribution lines.

This graph compares each water agency's total number of active meters in service. This includes service for residential, multi-family, commercial, and industrial customer accounts.

MILES OF WATER MAINS
FY 2001
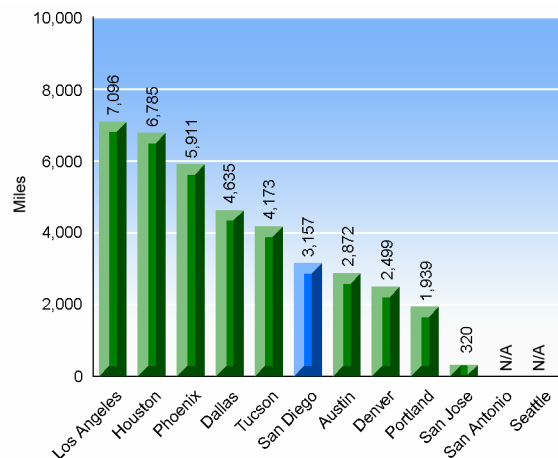
NUMBERS OF METERS IN SERVICE
FY 2001
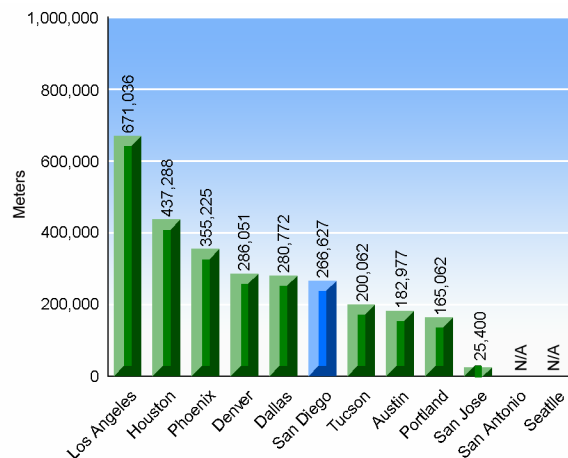
This graph reflects a comparison of average monthly residential water bills among San Diego County Water Authority member agencies. All agencies reflected import and treat the same Colorado River and State Water Project source water.

COMPARATIVE MONTHLY RESIDENTIAL WATER COST FOR SAN DIEGO COUNTY
AS OF JANUARY 1, 2002

City Government Structure Comparison

This section compares general city data for most of the cities used in the Comparison to Other Jurisdictions sections. If Fiscal Year 2003 information is not available, Fiscal Year 2002 information is used instead.

CITY	FORM OF GOVERNMENT	FISCAL YEAR
Austin, Texas	Council / Manager	October - September
Dallas, Texas	Council / Manager	October - September
Denver, Colorado	Strong Mayor / Council	January - December
Honolulu, Hawaii	Council / Mayor	July - June
Houston, Texas	Mayor/Council	July - June
Los Angeles, California	Mayor / Council	July - June
Miami, Florida	Mayor / Commisssion	October - September
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma	Council / Manager	July - June
Phoenix, Arizona	Council / Manager	July - June
Portland, Oregon	Modified Commission	July - June
Richmond, Virginia	Council / Manager	July - June
San Antonio, Texas	Charter City, Council / Manager	October - September
San Diego, California	Council / Manager	July - June
San Francisco, California	Chartered City /County	July - June
San Jose, California	Council / Manager	July - June
Seattle, Washington	Strong Mayor / Council	January - December
Tucson, Arizona	Council / Manager	July - June
Virginia Beach, Virginia	Council / Manager	July - June

Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

POPULATION ESTIMATE

City	Population
Los Angeles	3,802,700
Houston	1,998,325
Phoenix	1,373,947
San Diego	1,255,700
San Antonio	1,226,250
Dallas	1,208,300
San Jose	917,971
Honolulu	881,295
San Francisco	793,600
Austin	667,705
Seattle	570,800
Denver	564,606
Portland	536,240
Oklahoma City	510,800
Tucson	498,305
Virginia Beach	425,257
Miami	362,470
Richmond	197,790
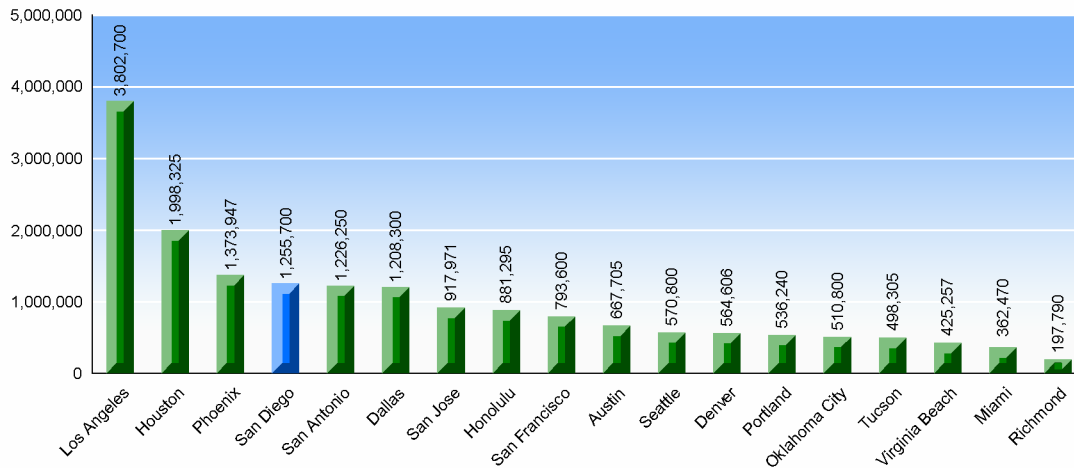
Note: Population estimates based on census data ranging from 2002 - 2002.

AREA OF CITY (SQUARE MILE)

City	Square Miles
Houston	623
Oklahoma City	621
Honolulu	600
Phoenix	484
Los Angeles	470
San Antonio	430
Dallas	375
San Diego	331
Virginia Beach	310
Austin	232
Tucson	223
San Jose	177
Denver	155
Portland	147
Seattle	83
Richmond	63
San Francisco	46
Miami	35
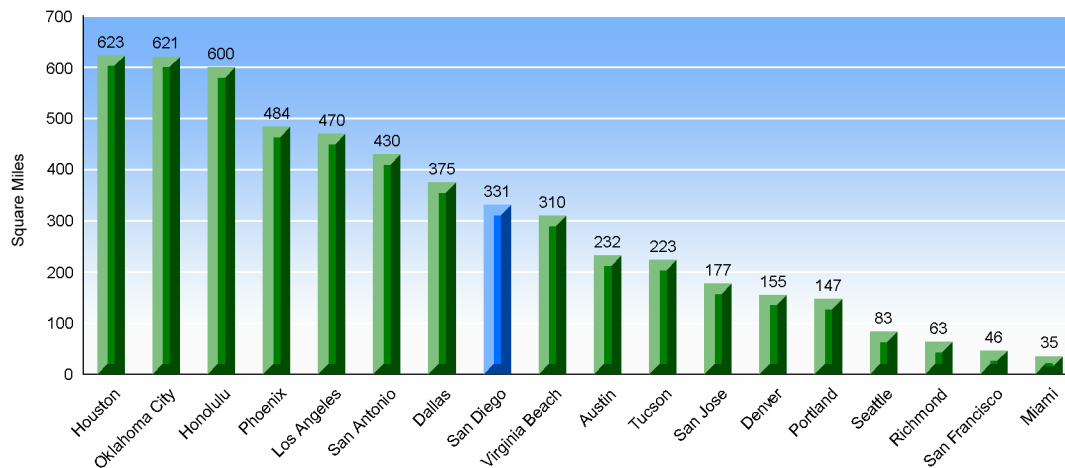
FISCAL YEAR 2002 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Chart of FY 2002 General Fund Budget (Millions):
- Los Angeles: $3,220.84
- San Francisco: $2,333.42
- Houston: $1,452.18
- Phoenix: $881.69
- Dallas: $819.16
- Denver: $787.05
- San Diego: $727.36
- San Jose: $701.60
- Honolulu: $672.67
- Virginia Beach: $670.08
- Seattle: $642.58
- San Antonio: $596.64
- Richmond: $500.50
- Austin: $470.88
- Miami: $385.31
- Portland: $360.79
- Tucson: $326.57
- Oklahoma City: $326.57

GENERAL FUND BUDGET PER CAPITA

Chart of General Fund Actual Expenditures Per Capita / General Fund Budget Per Capita:
- San Francisco: $2,811 / $2,940
- Richmond: $2,443 / $2,530
- Virginia Beach: $1,174 / $1,576
- Denver: $1,351 / $1,394
- Seattle: $1,115 / $1,126
- Miami: $883 / $1,063
- Los Angeles: $848 / $847
- San Jose: $623 / $764
- Honolulu: $729 / $763
- Houston: $686 / $727
- Austin: $665 / $705
- Dallas: $657 / $678
- Portland: $631 / $673
- Tucson: $584 / $655
- Phoenix: $568 / $642
- San Diego: $527 / $579
- Oklahoma City: $495 / $519
- San Antonio: $472 / $487

Legend: ▉ General Fund Actual Expenditures Per Capita   ▉ General Fund Budget Per Capita

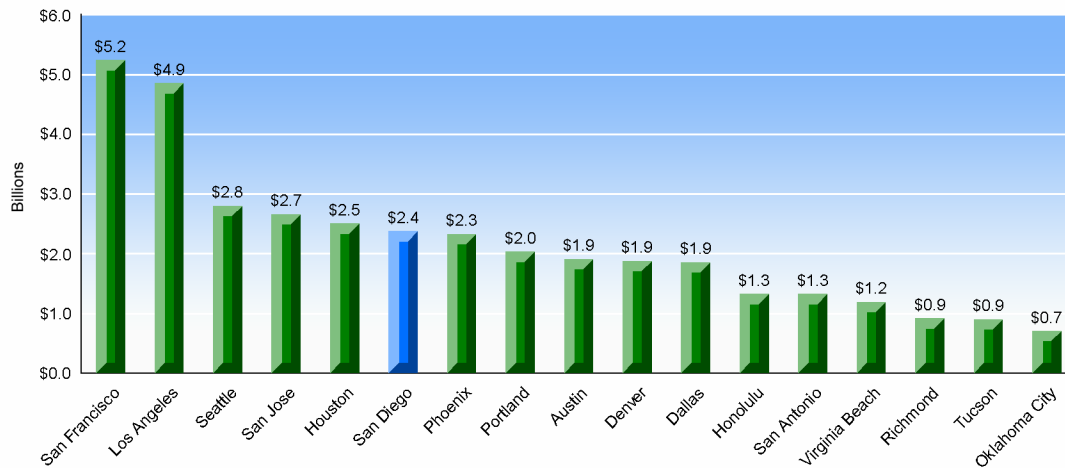# Performance Management Program
Benchmarking in the City of San Diego

TOTAL CITY BUDGET

NUMBER OF TOTAL CITY EMPLOYEES (FTE)